

House Bill 225

March 22, 2011

Presented by Chas Van Genderen  
Senate Fish and Game Committee

Mr. Chairman and committee members, I am Chas Van Genderen, Administrator of Montana State Parks of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). I am in support of House Bill 225.

Montana State Parks provides safety education and grant administration for snowmobile users across the state. Annually, we grant monies to about 25 snowmobile clubs to groom trails on federal, state, and private lands. The division is responsible for following the Montana Environmental Policy Act. Historically, we have required snowmobile clubs to complete Environmental Assessments on lands being groomed as a matter of policy.

Recently, we have begun to reevaluate our approaches. Federal agencies analyze impacts to the lands being groomed under the National Environmental Policy Act and for us to do a similar activity is duplicative. We desire to cut down on the complexity and time necessary in getting these grooming grants awarded without harming natural resource values.

This bill represents a step in the right direction, and the agency stands in support of its passage.